



## Defense Suicide Prevention Office Video Transcript

### Spotlight on Suicide Prevention: Army Joint Base Lewis-McChord

Renee Johnson:

Thank you for joining us for a spotlight on suicide prevention, a new series of videos posted by the Department of Defense to highlight the achievements of our local programs. Today, we're joined by our friends from the U.S. Army Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington. They are an example of what suicide prevention looks like at the local levels of our military communities. Their efforts to raise awareness and prevent suicide are inspiring and innovative.

Let's learn about our guests and their work to keep our Service members safe from suicide. The team at Joint Base Lewis-McChord embraced a year-round suicide prevention mindset by utilizing the hashtag #notjustSeptember across social media and in strategic and community-based messaging. Throughout the year, they engaged in a variety of events to promote personal resilience, team-building efforts, help-seeking behaviors, fighting stigma, supporting self-care, and positive coping skills. The biggest event of the year was the "Fill the Ruck 5K" event, which was attended by over 1,500 Service members who marched with a ruck of a minimum of 30 pounds, with additional weight provided as a symbol of the extra weight that we carry daily from life's stressors. Participants received yellow shoestrings with the message "Connect to Protect," which they wore during the event to promote the message that strength comes from unity and to encourage conversations about normalizing mental health and suicide prevention efforts. Thank you for joining us today. Can you please take a moment to introduce yourself and your title?

Jackeline Young:

Hi, I'm Jackie Young and I'm the suicide prevention program coordinator for Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

Renee Johnson:

Let's learn more about your efforts and shine a light on your amazing accomplishments. Please share details about your program, what your team accomplished, and what works best to encourage participation and engagement.

Jackeline Young:

So, our suicide prevention program is part of the Army Substance Abuse Program, and it consists of a dedicated team that includes our ASAP program manager, our prevention coordinator manager, five ASAP specialists and the suicide prevention coordinator. So we focus on making our services relevant and accessible.

Something that we're the most proud of is our annual awareness event called "Fill the Ruck," and this event allows us to partner with various organizations, both on and off post, to inform the Service members about prevention programs, increased connectedness to team building activities and also highlight resources available. Overall, the most meaningful aspect is the peer-to-peer interaction which foster relationship building and connection.



Renee Johnson:

What inspired you to build your program this way, and why do you feel that your initiative has had such a positive impact in preventing suicide?

Jackeline Young:

Yeah. So our inspiration for building the program this way, it stems from a deep desire to kind of possibly impact the lives of our military community. Many of us have experienced additional training where we notice that people tend to tune out after a few minutes. And even though it is a great message, it can get lost. So, this experience has really highlighted the need for a more engaging approach, and that's why we emphasize meaningful interactions through outside-the-box training that utilizes the adult learning model.

Our training is relatable, it's hands-on, and encourages real conversations. So, by focusing on increasing this protective factors instead of just checking boxes, we create an environment when individuals feel comfortable and open up and connecting with one another.

Renee Johnson:

Do you think your program has implications outside of your installation or organization, either across other Services or potentially for suicide prevention efforts in the civilian community?

Jackeline Young:

Absolutely. When we consider the military community, we're talking about Service members, their family, and also DOD civilians. So, our ultimate goal is to foster a culture of change and creates lives worth living. So, the skills that individuals acquire to our program are not just applicable within the military, but they are life skills that they take with them as they move on to their communities outside of the gate. Whether that is PCSing or transitioning into the civilian world, these skills help promote resilience and awareness and it contributes to the broader suicide prevention efforts, and this is how we drive meaningful culture change that extends beyond our installation.

Renee Johnson:

Thank you all for sharing with us the ways you've worked to make our Army safe from suicide. I am confident I can say this on behalf of the audience, we've learned so much about the ways that we can lead the fight and help eliminate and reduce suicide across the entire Department of Defense and the Army.

Jackeline Young:

Yeah. Thanks for having me. It's my pleasure.

Renee Johnson:

Our guests were honored at the 2024 Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Recognition Ceremony in September for their campaigns and initiatives to prevent suicide. This recognition took place at the Pentagon Hall of Heroes.



To those watching, we hope you enjoyed listening to what you've heard. Please help us spread the word by sharing the link for this video with others. If you found it on social media, please consider sharing it on your timeline for your friends and connections to discover. To access more videos and resources at the Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Office video library, visit us online at [DSPO.mil](https://DSPO.mil).

If you are a Service member in crisis, please remember that you are never alone. Dial 988 and press one for the Veterans and Military Crisis Line. You can also access the crisis line by texting 838255 or chat online at [veteranscrisisline.net](https://veteranscrisisline.net) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.